Level Trade Talks were held from 17—21 January and on 5th February, 1999 respectively.

The Foreign Secretary Level Talks covered issues pertaining to bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Commerce Secretary level talks discussed issues of commercial and economic importance for development of bilaterial relations viz; review of the macro-economic situation and policies in both the countries, impact of the financial crisis in South-East Asian countries on the Japanese economy and trade and its consequent repercussions on our bilateral trade, current status and scope for increase in Indo-Japanese bilateral trade, apart from discussions on stand of each country on multilateral trade and economic cooperation issues.

No specific Trade Agreements were concluded during these Talks.

Distortion of Census Data

*166. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the 30th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes reveals census bungling in some States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken to set right the distortion of census data?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MENEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The 30th Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes does not reveal any census bungling.

However, under Annexure 4 of the Report an article written by Shri Sharad Kulkarni is enclosed as miscellaneous papers. This article titled as 'Distortion of Census Data on Scheduled Tribes' states that the increase in tribal population as depicted in 1981 census over 1971 census is due to two reasons viz;

(i) 'Removal of Area Restrictions (Amendment) Act, 1996' made the lists (of Scheduled Tribes) applicable to all the areas in the state whereas in 1971 it was restricted to the members of any specific Tribe, only if they were living in the area specified for that tribe.

(ii) Deliberate fraudulent responses given to the census enumerators by non-tribal house-holds.

However, the contents of the article do not reflect any bungling in the census process.

(c) Wide publicity is given during census about various provisions of the Census Act according to which the respodents are required to give correct information and it also binds enumerators to record the information truth-fully.

Data is collected at each census with due care by well-trained anumerators and as per the lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as appearing in the 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists (Modification)Order 1956' as amended from time to time.

Transfer of ESIC Deposit

*167. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge amount of Rs.100 crore of the ESI Corporation has been transferred to the Union Bank of India; if so, the reasons therefore;

(b) whether the ESIC Board has not recommended this transfer and Government have even then issued orders for the transfer of the deposit; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Central investment subsidy reimbursement

*168. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some State Governments have sent memoranda to Government for the Central Investment Subsidy reimbursement claim;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether inspite of Supreme Court's decision for grant of Central Investment Subsidy, no action has been taken by Government till date;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the total amount of Central Investment Subsidy outstanding for Punjab and other States; and

(f) by when a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (f) Some State Governments have claims under this scheme which are yet to be submitted for reimbursement to the Central Government. The Scheme had ceased to exist on 30-9-1988. Whenever a proposal for reimbursement of subsidy in the light of Hon'ble Supreme Court Order is received, the same is processed for necessary action.

Revival of TCIL

*169. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "package for Bengal announced", published in the Business Standard, dated 11th February, 1999, regarding Government's decision to revive Tyre Corporation of India Limited (TCIL), which included Industrial Rubber Product (IRP) Unit at Tangra; and

(b) if so, the reasons for forcing a Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) on this Unit?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) which is along the lines of Voluntary retirement scheme is voluntary in nature and cannot be forced on any unit. The Industrial Rubber Product (IRP) (Tangra) unit has been continuously dependant on GOI's Budgetary support for wages and salaries and statutory dues and the operations of the unit did not stabilise even after carrying out essential repairs in 1996. In order to mitigate the hardship of the employees, Government has decided to introudce VSS for the employees of Tangra unit. Goverument have decided to extend by another 3 months the initial offer of Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS). A group of Experts is being set up to review the possibility of revival.

व्यापार संबंधी बौद्धिक सम्पदा अधिकार समझौते की समीक्षा

*170. **डा० महेश चन्द्र शर्मा:** क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या विश्व व्यापार संगठन की महापरिषद् व्यापार संबंधी बौद्धिक सम्पदा अधिकार समझौते (ट्रिप्स एग्रीमेंट) के विविध प्रावधानों की समीक्षा करने वाली है तथा क्या उनके मंत्रालय ने इस संदर्भ में कोई प्रारंभिक विचार आलेख (प्रिलिमनरी इश्यू पेपर) तैयार किया है;

(ख) क्या संबंधित विशेषज्ञों तथा स्वैच्छिक संगठनों के विचार जानने के लिए यह विचार आलेख उनके पास भेजा गया था;

(ग) इस आलेख की विषयवस्तु क्या है तथा इस विचार आलेख पर मंत्रालय को किस प्रकार की टिप्पणियां प्राप्त हुई हैं; और

(घ) इस संबंध में भावी योजना क्या है?